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The Scrapbooking Wave: It may be time for photo labs to get in lucrative business—it's making quite a splash

8/1/2002 - Donna Rogers

The Scrapbooking Wave:
It may be time for photo labs to get into this
lucrative business—it's making quite a splash.

by Donna Rogers

August 2002

Paper Punchers, Diamond Dust, ABC lettering tracers, Border Buddies, nonstick scissors, circular cutters, memory markers. If these very words sound unfamiliar, you may be left behind as the scrapbooking tide surges in. In the past two years, a scrapbooking trade show was launched, and at least six magazines now support this fastest-growing crafting hobby, including Creative Keepsakes and Scrapbooks Etc. from such heavy hitters as Primedia and Better Homes and Gardens, respectively. The Hobby Industry Association in 1999 reported

\$300 million in scrapbooking revenues. In contrast, last year's annual industry sales were \$1.4 billion to a survey titled "Scrapbooking in America (SIA)" commissioned by Creating Keepsakes and Crafty magazines. This number represents a 600% sales increase over the past five years. Another indicator, January 2002 "Creating Keepsakes Hour" on cable TV network QVC—a four hour period during which breaking \$4 million worth of scrapbook products were sold.

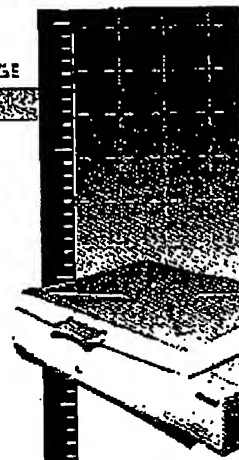
While the rapidly growing hobby has obvious synergy with photofinishers, some object to allotting space already cramped stores for an item they think may be a fad. Think about this: Americans take approximately 10 million photos a day, for a total of more than 20 billion photos a year in the United States alone, according to PMA. And over 85% will put them into scrapbooks and albums. Scrapbook crafters also buy and use process film, and make reprints and enlargements. CK says nearly half of its readers report having purchased a new camera since they began scrapbooking, and a third either have or are planning to buy a digital camera. They also highlight their photos using pattern-edged scissors, punches, stickers, die-cut shapes, acid-free papers, adhesives and albums.

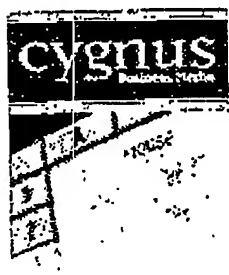
Growing Trend

Scrapbooking boomed in the first few years, says Deborah Mock, editor of Memory Makers magazine in Colorado. What, in 1995, was a nonexistent industry, in a few short years has turned into a multi-million industry. Her magazine has paralleled growth in the industry, starting in May 1996 with a base of about 10,000 paid subscribers. In five years it has grown to a paid circulation of nearly 70,000 subscribers and a circulation of 225,000. Other forms of memory crafting are also popular, she reports, such as photo quilts, holiday cards and shadowboxes that hold memorabilia. These items make meaningful gifts, Mock says.

A competitor, Creating Keepsakes magazine, Salt Lake City, Utah, which has a circulation of about 100,000 and a readership estimated at 1/2 million, was purchased in 2001 by New York City-based publishing giant Primedia. CK reports two-thirds of its readers spent more than \$300 on products and supplies in the past 12 months, according to a study done in 2000. In 2001, CK introduced a three-day educational event called Creating Keepsakes University (CKU), which sold out to 600 registrants four months prior to the event. Ever wonder if these "scrappers" or "scrapbookers," as they are called, process much film? A 2000 survey, the latest of which is available, found that Creating Keepsakes' readers go through an average

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rolls of film each month, while the average household takes 6.4 weeks to use up one roll of film.

On the paper supply side, sales are doing very well, concurs Kristi Sikora Blankenship of Paper Adv division of Leader Paper Products, a 101-year-old family-owned business in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. "we increase the number of retailers," whether it is specialty stores that carry only scrapbook material camera-type stores, that are finally getting on the bandwagon, she says. Those interested in the hobby "passionately reading and active on the Internet. They are so hungry," she notes. "It is an exciting, a dynamic market."

They thought the scrapbook trend would only last five years, says Cathie Zucco, buyer with Click Camera Video, which has 10 stores in the Dayton, OH, area, "but it is here to stay." As the first retailer in Ohio the scrapbook market, sales did very well those first few years, with people traveling up to 100 miles the camera retailers' supplies out. "Sales are a little bit flat [now]," she acknowledges, "because of all competition—including full-line scrapbooking stores."

Four of its stores emphasize the hobby with up to 800 square feet dedicated to it, while other stores comprise a small 10-foot section of wall, mostly on standard four-foot wide by four or five foot high racks.

This photo retailer has quite a number of strategies that keep customers coming back. A Club with a membership card offers 10 percent discounts on all purchases, and some free processing perks. A card mailed to all members to keep them informed. Classes are taught by two instructors in three stores. "We offer on average six times a week varying in length from two to four hours, and cost about \$20 to \$30 including materials. "Hot Off The Press's papers come on spinner racks by theme," she says. "We like those in our classes because the papers match, making it easier for the customer." HOTP's large spinner holds eight 12 x 12 books of paper, 24 8.5 x 11 books of paper and 16 Punch Out books.

Click Camera also likes EK Success's photo tinting pens, templates and circle cutters and Pioneer a They also stock a full assortment of artist Susan Branch's papers and stickers from Colorbok, Dexter in a rack for easy-to-see presentation. Of course, Zucco says, it's important to have on hand an array of latest how-to magazines like Memory Makers and Creating Keepsakes.

Marketing Devices

PhotoTidings, Inc. (www.phototidings.com), an 18-year-old company in Eugene, OR, makes a wide array of photo products such as calendars, greeting cards and scrapbook prints. High resolution digital templates can be purchased individually or in theme packages. These special templates will print from a standard F. Rogene Manas, head designer and one of the three owners of PhotoTidings, says the timing is perfect to get into printing photo products. "With the ease from new technology and the superb quality of digital photo labs are in a great position to create new markets for themselves. The photofinisher simply places customer's photo into the open space on the template, adds some text and prints out a quality product that rivals card store, quick print and stationery offerings. And the best part is, there is nothing to stock; it takes the space the store owner needs is for a counter display or a catalog with samples."

PhotoTidings prides itself on its selection of high quality designs. "We treat photos with a lot of respect," adds. "They are the focal points of all our products. That's why we keep the designs clean and simple is to enhance the photo, not compete with it."

PhotoTidings' newest photo products include designs for births, graduations, birthdays, weddings, and other life celebrations. They also have an array of designs for the holidays. The printed pieces are perfect for scrapbooking since they include borders and personalized text options on archival photographic paper. "Photofinishers are falling short in providing custom product displays," Manas says. "If the customer doesn't see the products, they will never order them." In order to make it work, PhotoTidings includes free displays with every package of products they sell. These can be inserted into page protectors and used in an end display (which the company also markets) or in a 3-ring binder so customers can flip through the selection of samples.

An average package of templates has from 10-15 designs (in vertical and horizontal formats) and cost \$200-300. The purchaser buys full copyright printing rights. "It seems a small price to pay for unlimited use when you compare it to the cost of buying a rack of cards that you can sell one time only," she states. "It's a perfect product for the time. All photofinishers need to buy is our CD, and with paper and chemicals can print up a fortune."

Wausau, Wisconsin-based Fiskars, Inc. (www.fiskars.com), well-known for their scissors, recently introduced several hot products for scrapbookers, according to Jessica Curran, associate communications coordinator. First is the ShapeBoss, a unique embossing system that does not require a light box. You simply place a piece of cardstock between the specially designed stencils and trace with the stylus to create beautifully embossed designs that add elegance to scrapbook pages. This system coordinates with the ShapeCutter system, which allows for cropping by holding all pieces in place. The newest addition to the paper punches line is the Border Punch. These new punches align easily so you can create a continuous border without measuring. A cutting tool is the new Comfort-Grip Micro-Tip Scissors, which have oversized handles that are comfortable for larger hands and are great for detail cutting. The one must-have tool for these retailers is the Photo 12-inch Portable Paper Trimmer. This item quickly and easily trims photos and fits the 12 x 12-inch photo scrapbookers love.

Fiskars has several floor displays and counter displays to choose from that work well for 1-hour labs and finishing shops. On average, according to Fiskars' findings, most independents allocate a maximum

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can't make them
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destinations at our
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for scrapbooking supplies.

C-Line Products, Inc. (www.c-lineproducts.com), gives scrapbooking enthusiasts new options in scr design and photo protection with a new line of Memory Book Page Protectors. The company has introduced a new line of page protectors which includes two new 12 x 12 protectors with innovative photo pockets offering of its kind in the marketplace. Photo pockets are available in a 6-pocket page that holds 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 photos and a 4-pocket page for 4 x 6 photos. The 4 x 6 page includes a mini pocket that can identify theme. Scrapbookers will find the formats add a creative dimension to their projects. These unique Memory Book Page Protectors can be placed behind a scrapbook page to safely store related photos. Photo pockets are cropped and customized with a variety of materials to create fun, mini scrapbook pages as part of a book.

Paul Chasoff, C-Line product manager, said, "Scrapbookers have asked for a place to keep photos related to their design. Our new photo pages let people insert pictures right into their 12 x 12 memory book pages. They can decorate them as much, or as little, as they want."

These new acid-free Memory Book Page Protectors from C-Line provide archival quality protection for scrapbook pages. Available in many sizes and formats, Memory Book Page Protectors fit 8 1/2 x 11, 12 x 12 three-ring binders and most two-post albums. High quality, PVC-free polypropylene sleeves, glare and clear varieties, won't yellow with age, won't stick to photos and won't transfer ink. All sleeves have a clear binding edge that won't compete with scrapbook page design and are designed for easy loading and hole punching required.

Paper Adventures has a wide array of papers, mostly single sheets of card stock. Some of the newest are textured, dimensional, like the new Paper al fresco which Sikora-Blankenship says, is flying off the shelves. Sparkly paper like Diamond Dust, she adds, is still continually growing in popularity. Other new papers include Flannel Sheets and Two-Tone Archivals, a double-sided felt paper. "Based on consumer demand, we have recently come up with rolls of stickers that coordinate with our papers to help meet high consumer demand for products that easily coordinate." The company offers a rack program for which are full double stacked towers that hold 8 1/2 x 11 or 12 x 12 sheets or a combination of each. EK Success, Clifton, NJ, has an extensive line of scrapbooking supplies. Among its product stable is a Memory System markers (which are acid-free, fade proof and non-bleeding), ZIG Photo Twin, a dual marker for easy-to-use hand-inking, ABC Tracers creative lettering, and Border Buddy Templates—with bordering patterns, fancy corners and cute cut-outs. Popular with photo retailers are its new Page Shapers, which come in a choice of 24 various shaped paper punchers, says Dale Nicholson, marketing director, as well as its Circle Ruler and Circle Scissor for measuring and cutting circles.

EK Success also has sales promotions for its partners, including free and discounted racking with purchase one of its programs. In addition, says Nicholson, because photo retailers' needs are different from the scrapbook specialty stores, our racks are specifically designed for photo stores.

A Lucrative Deal

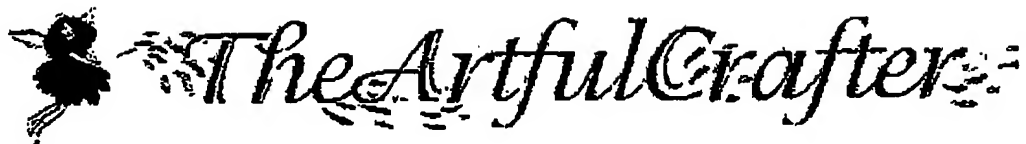
Why does this scrapbook tide surge so strong for those involved? "It's an emotional thing," says Clic Zucco. "It's about the thing they're interested in—it's endearing to them. It's the perfect match for our she says. "It's sort of a no-brainer."

"We started out much to the dismay of our traditional photo people," she says. "[However], it really is rewarding—for sales of cameras and processing. We had no idea of its potential."

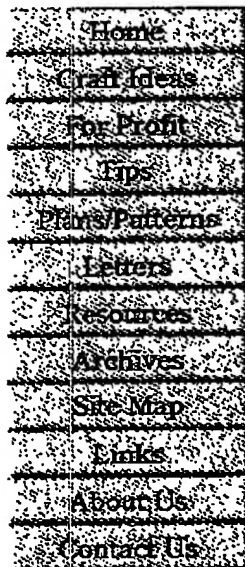
"At PMA last year, we were still explaining what scrapbooking is," says Memory Makers' Mock. Despite seemingly natural affinity, the independent labs don't seem to be understanding the benefits of team. "What would really be great—and lucrative—is for a photo retailer to partner up with a scrapbooking says. Plan some cross marketing. "Then just make sure you have a Kodak Picture Maker or another duplication kiosk," she notes, because the scrapbooker is spending money on duplication. "They are numerous copies, and the handier it is the more they'll do."

Perhaps it's time to ride the scrapbooking wave. Photo retailers are really missing an opportunity if they continue to ignore the scrapbooking customer, says Mock. "It's a perfect partnership."





Dry Embossing



Dry Embossing is an easy technique that creates dimension and adds texture and elegance to your page. I have used dry embossing techniques

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to create distinctive cards, usually containing my customer's monogram and an elegant raised border. I have found I can charge premium prices for a nicely boxed set of cards and matching envelopes.

Dry Embossing Using a Light Box

Until recently, you needed a light box or strong light source for dry embossing. The light source is placed under the embossing stencil, with the paper to be impressed on

top and both secured in place with pegs or tape. Using a stylus, you trace the outline of the design – and the outline only.

This results in a nice rounded raised section; if you attempt to rub out the entire embossed area, the result will be messy and very inelegant.

Since you're working upside down, any directional designs, such as letters or arrows, need to be traced in reverse. Generally you want a heavy paper which will take and hold your embossed impression. Do test your papers first! I usually use my favorite: manila file folders.

The paper you choose makes a big difference on in the final outcome. Please visit, **How to Choose the Right Paper for Your Craft Project** for tips and ideas on how to choose the right paper.

One source of high quality and unusual papers I highly recommend is **Paper.com**. If you can't find the specific paper you need in your local stores or if you just want to save time, gas and money, give them a try. There sell many papers that can be used to make elegant dry embossed cards and other projects. **Click here** to visit their site.

When I first decided to try dry embossing, I went to my local craft superstore and spent what seemed like hours trying to decide what pieces I needed. It was mind boggling; and there didn't seem to be a clerk on duty who knew anything about embossing.

There were many expensive dry embossing tools: light boxes, brass stencils, instruction books, various sizes of styluses. I was just about to

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conclude that I could never make a profit with dry embossing when a very kind lady tapped me on the shoulder and said, "I see you're having a hard time deciding. I give embossing classes. Let me give you a few tips."

She suggested I try dry embossing with things I already had at home. If I liked it, I would have a better idea of what direction to go.

Rather than buying a light box, you can use a window on a bright day. Just tape your embossing stencil or design to the window. However this means working vertically and probably standing up.

So I took another of her tips and made my own primitive light box: a piece of glass from an old picture frame taped to a plastic frame from a hanging drawer I wasn't using. Placing my mounted glass across two chairs allowed room to put a bright light underneath.

It was not all that convenient and it wobbled a bit; but allowed me to experiment and get started. I soon found other uses for my light table, for example basic tracing and reversing designs. So it still comes in quite handy.

If you prefer to buy a light box rather than make your own, here's what to look for. The box should have well-distributed lighting. That usually means having more than one light bulb.

It should be ergonomic – either with a slanted top which is comfortable for you or a top that can be tilted to suit various users.

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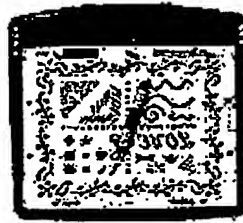
Think about whether you want it to be easily portable or whether you prefer to leave it set up at all times. **MisterArt** has a broad selection of light tables at discount prices.

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elegant, paint/quilt.
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paints, books, brushes,
more.
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A highly rated, inexpensive desktop model is the **Artograph Light Tracer Lite Box**. It meets my basic requirements and I feel it would be more than adequate for most uses. To learn more or to order this fine product, [click here](#).

A light box has so many craft uses that I really recommend one even if you buy the **Shapeboss** for your dry embossing projects.

Using Fiskars ShapeBoss – The Ultimate Embossing System



As soon as I had enough profit from my first dry embossing attempts, I splurged on the **Fiskars Shapeboss** dry embossing system.

I would wager every crafter knows **Fiskars'** products. From shape cutters and systems to any kind of scissors imaginable, Fiskars always delivers innovative high quality products at reasonable prices. I love this company!

Now **Fiskars** has come up with the **Shapeboss** - *The Ultimate Embossing System*. It truly is the ultimate dry embossing tool.

The Shapeboss makes dry embossing much easier and also can be used for "wet" embossing, stenciling with paint, ink, chalk, etc. and even cutting shapes. As I said earlier, when I had made enough profit on my embossed products, I had to have the ShapeBoss.

[Business tip: I always look at each product line independently. It must be profitable on its own. This keeps me from investing in expensive limited use equipment that may never have a payback.]

The Fiskars ShapeBoss is a box with positioning pegs, a stylus and a dry embossing stencil set. A light box is no longer needed.

Metal, cardstock or vellum (virtually any material that you can make a dent in with a stylus) is placed between the dry embossing stencil plates. The purpose of the top stencil is to give you a pattern to follow with your stylus. The purpose of the bottom stencil is to allow the stylus to push the material down into the patterns, which stretches the material permanently, creating the raised embossed image.

Because the stencils and material are firmly held in place you can produce a sharper, better image. Most importantly, you don't need x-ray vision to see your stencil's outline!

When I used my old system to stencil through heavy paper into the dry embossing stencil plate below, I had trouble keeping my stylus from slipping out of line. No more! The ShapeBoss is simply revolutionary.

In addition to the *ShapeBoss* box itself, you can buy different dry embossing stencil sets, such as **Shapeboss Rectangle-Classic 9 X11**, allowing thousands of different designs to be produced.

The ShapeBoss can also be used with Fiskars **Shapecutter** to create

cutouts of your choice. Learn more [by clicking here.](#)

Fiskars also makes the **ScrapBoss** which is basically the same as the Shapeboss, but accommodates 12 x 12 inch pages, for scrapbooking and other needs. Right now, if you purchase this product you receive free shipping.

All these wonderful products are available from Joann's at great prices. Why travel all over town to find what you want. Just click on any of the blue links to learn more about the product or to order it.

If you don't already own one of these wonderful gadgets, now is a good time to look into buying one. During December, you can get 50% off one item at Joann.com. What better item to buy. Click on the coupon to get your savings.



Dry-embossing is now accessible to everyone – from kids to adults with disabilities. Your imagination is your only limitation.

Embossed designs add a special elegance to scrapbook pages, collages, note cards, wedding invitations, menu cards, holiday cards and ornaments. There's just no end to what you can create and what an impression (pun intended) you can make!

For more information on dry embossing techniques & tips, please visit [Dry Embossing Tips](#).

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